

military personnel strengths for fiscal year 2001, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Mr. LAUTENBERG):

S. 2482. A bill to assist States and units of local government in carrying out Safe Homes-Safe Streets programs; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. SNOWE (for herself and Mr. WARNER):

S. 2483. A bill to provide for the eligibility of small business concerns owned and controlled by women for assistance under the mentor-protégé program of the Department of Defense; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. CLELAND (for himself and Mr. COVERDELL):

S. 2484. A bill to ensure that immigrant students and their families receive the services that the students and families need to successfully participate in elementary schools, secondary schools, and communities, in the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Ms. SNOWE):

S. 2485. A bill to direct the Secretary of the interior to provide assistance in planning and constructing a regional heritage center in Calais, Maine; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. ROBB (for himself and Mr. WARNER):

S. Res. 298. A resolution designating the month of May each year as the Month for Children; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MCCONNELL (for himself and Mr. DODD):

S. Res. 299. A resolution to make technical corrections to the Standing Rules of the Senate; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. WELLSTONE:

S. Res. 300. A resolution designating the week of April 23-30, 2000, as "National Shaken Baby Syndrome Awareness Week"; considered and agreed to.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. BURNS (for himself, Mr. DORGAN, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. BAUCUS):

S. 2476. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 in order to prohibit any regulatory impediments to completely and accurately fulfilling the sufficiency of support mandates of the national statutory policy of universal service, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

UNIVERSAL SERVICE SUPPORT ACT

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the Universal Service Support Act, a bill that will spur increased access to communications services for rural America. Just a few short years ago, we took the dramatic step of reshaping our nation's commu-

nications policy by passing the Telecommunications Act of 1996. A significant element of that initiative was the codification of a reconstituted policy of universal service, which guarantees all Americans with the ability to access to quality communications services.

Nevertheless, a significant impediment to the fulfillment of this national policy exists. There currently exist two regulatory caps that are limiting the amount of support that can be directed to high-cost infrastructure deployment initiatives that are covered under the 1996 Act.

The regulatory caps were first instituted in 1994 at a time when a significant number of communications infrastructure acquisitions were taking place. This was in the days prior to the 1996 Act, which initiated competition and deregulation into the communications industry. Many of the acquisitions of that time involved the rural exchanges of large incumbent local exchange carriers that were divesting themselves of properties deemed to be unprofitable or otherwise undesirable. The entities purchasing such exchanges were generally the small rural cooperative and commercial systems that have served large portions of the nation's rural areas for years.

The Federal Communications Commission instituted these caps because the acquiring carriers were seeking support for these newly acquired exchanges in order to upgrade them to the standards of the day. Generally this meant that universal service support was being sought and approved for areas which had never before received such support. The FCC was concerned that the level of support might escalate and in response it imposed both a cap on individual areas and also on the overall support channeling through the system. While waivers to the caps were occasionally granted, for all intents and purposes growth of universal service support other than for the addition of new lines was effectively halted.

However, shortly thereafter the 1996 Act was enacted, which radically changed this nation's telecommunications landscape. The Act envisioned an evolving universal service support system which would help ensure the deployment of advanced services. The regulatory caps are at odds with this policy and must be repealed.

We cannot permit regulatory policies that are so clearly inconsistent with statutory policy to stand unchallenged. A national, statutory policy dedicated to universal communications service exists, and we can no longer allow inappropriate regulatory actions to undermine its intent. I urge my colleagues to join me in moving this initiative forward to passage prior to the end of this Congress.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself and Mr. BREAUX):

S. 2477. A bill to amend the Social Security Act to provide additional safeguards for beneficiaries with representative payees under the Old-Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance program or the Supplemental Security Income program; to the Committee on Finance.

SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFICIARIES PROTECTION ACT

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce legislation which would make Social Security beneficiaries, who had their benefits misused by organizational representative payees, whole. While most people receive their Social Security and Supplemental Security Income benefit payments directly, others must have assistance in money management. Benefits, totaling over \$25 billion, to these people are paid through representative payees who receive and manage the payments on behalf of the beneficiaries. Representative payee responsibilities include, but are not limited to, frequently monitoring the beneficiary's current well-being for food, shelter, clothing, medical care, and personal needs; informing the Social Security Administration of changes in the representative payee's own circumstances that would affect the performance of representative payee services; reporting events to the Social Security Administration that may affect the beneficiary's entitlement or amount of benefits; and submitting an annual accounting to SSA reporting about benefits received, used, and conserved.

Currently, about 6.5 million Social Security and Supplemental Security Income program beneficiaries rely on representative payees to manage their monthly benefits. SSA usually looks for a payee among the beneficiary's family and friends. For others, those traditional networks of support are not available, and SSA relies on state, local, or community sources to fill the need. Family members serve as representative payees for about 88 percent of the beneficiaries requiring them. 45,050 organizations, such as institutions, government agencies, financial organizations, and qualified fee-for-service organizations, serve as payees for the other 12 percent, totaling 750,570 beneficiaries.

As Chairman of the Special Committee on Aging, I am especially concerned about the 795,060 beneficiaries, age 62 and over, who are served by representative payees. With the retirement of the baby boomer generation on the horizon, the number of institutions, such as nursing homes, serving as payees stands to increase dramatically. Therefore, addressing this matter now is all the more urgent.

The majority of representative payees provide much-needed help to beneficiaries without abusing this responsibility. A minority of payees misuse